

Title: Correlations between case management services and intermediate and ultimate outcomes of children placed in state's care.

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Quantitative Element

Due to the amount of work each case manager does and the amount of autonomy each worker has in completing their job, case management is not uniform in the way it is performed in protection and permanency. This study was designed to look at the individual components of case management to determine if they have any impact on the safety in the homes that have children returned to them. The study was a summative program evaluation using a non-experimental single group post-test design. Charts of 100 Protection and Permanency cases were reviewed to assess the progress of families based on the interventions of the case manager. Data collected showed a significant difference between the types of service to which the case manager referred the family and the risk assessment scores at the time of reunification. It also showed significant relationships between incomplete case plans, prevention plans, and higher risk assessment scores at the time of reunification. Finally, data showed a significant difference in the number of in-person contacts done by the case manager and the recidivism rate of out of home placements of children. The higher number of visits, the higher the recidivism rates. This may be due to workers having to increase their contacts with the amount of time spent in out-of-home care.

Qualitative Element

The research sought to describe the dynamics of a family that suffers from abuse or neglect by asking two questions. First, what are the developmental tasks and stages of families that have their children removed? Second, what are the circumstances that surround families that have multiple out of home placements of their children? An interpretive /descriptive approach was used to analyze data collected from the continuous quality assessments (family risk assessments) from 100 charts of families that had their children removed from the home due to substantiated abuse or neglect. The data were broken down into several categories: housing issues, mental and physical health issues, poverty, legal issues, single parent issues, drug or alcohol issues, parental behaviors, developmental stage, identified causes of stress, progress of family while in care, domestic violence, and child behavior issues. From this data, it was found that families that have their children removed were primarily single parent homes and that all of the families had issues with one or a combination of the following: issues of drug or alcohol abuse, domestic violence, mental / physical issues, poverty, legal issues, or housing issues. There were no developmental tasks themes noted from the evaluation of the continuous quality assessments, other than the overall feeling of "survival" taking precedence.

Impact of Practice

The major impact that these findings should have on social work practice in protection and permanency is to recognize the need for families to get proper services. The data from the case files show that if the worker concentrates on getting the right services to the family in a timely manner, the family is more likely to begin the healing process and not enter into the system multiple times. There was no one service that was more effective than others, so it is important for the social worker to do a proper assessment in order to recognize the services that would best benefit the uniqueness of the family. Data also showed that time spent with the family in number of contacts was not necessarily beneficial to the family. This means that efficiency of the worker could result in improved dynamics for both the worker and the families involved with the agency.

Case Management and Outcomes for Children in Care

Scott Elliott

Introduction

- Program
- Kids in care, ages ranging infant to 18, some up to age 21
- History
- Importance to SW

Research Questions

- Quantitative
 - Does any one component or combination of components of case management increase the functioning of the family?
- Qualitative
 - What are the developmental tasks or stages of a family that has children removed?
 - What are commonalties of families with multiple removals of their children?

Method: Quantitative

- Chart file review
- Sample size
- Variables of interest:
 - Contacts types and frequencies
 - Agency plans completed
 - Assessments of family risks and or functioning
 - Recidivism of abuse and neglect substantiation
 - Number and type of collateral referrals

Quantitative Results

Test One

- Conducted Spearman's rho tests to determine if there were relationships between agency plans developed and assessment ratings

***Significant correlation was found
between incomplete case plans and:***

- rating of child behavior patterns at time of reunification ($\rho(94) = .222$; $p = .030$)
- rating of adult behavior patterns at time of reunification ($\rho(92) = .267$; $p = .009$)
- rating of sequence of events at time of reunification ($\rho(94) = .277$; $p = .006$)
- rating of family development at time of reunification ($\rho(94) = .225$; $p = .028$)

*Significant correlation was found
between incomplete family objectives or
prevention plan and:*

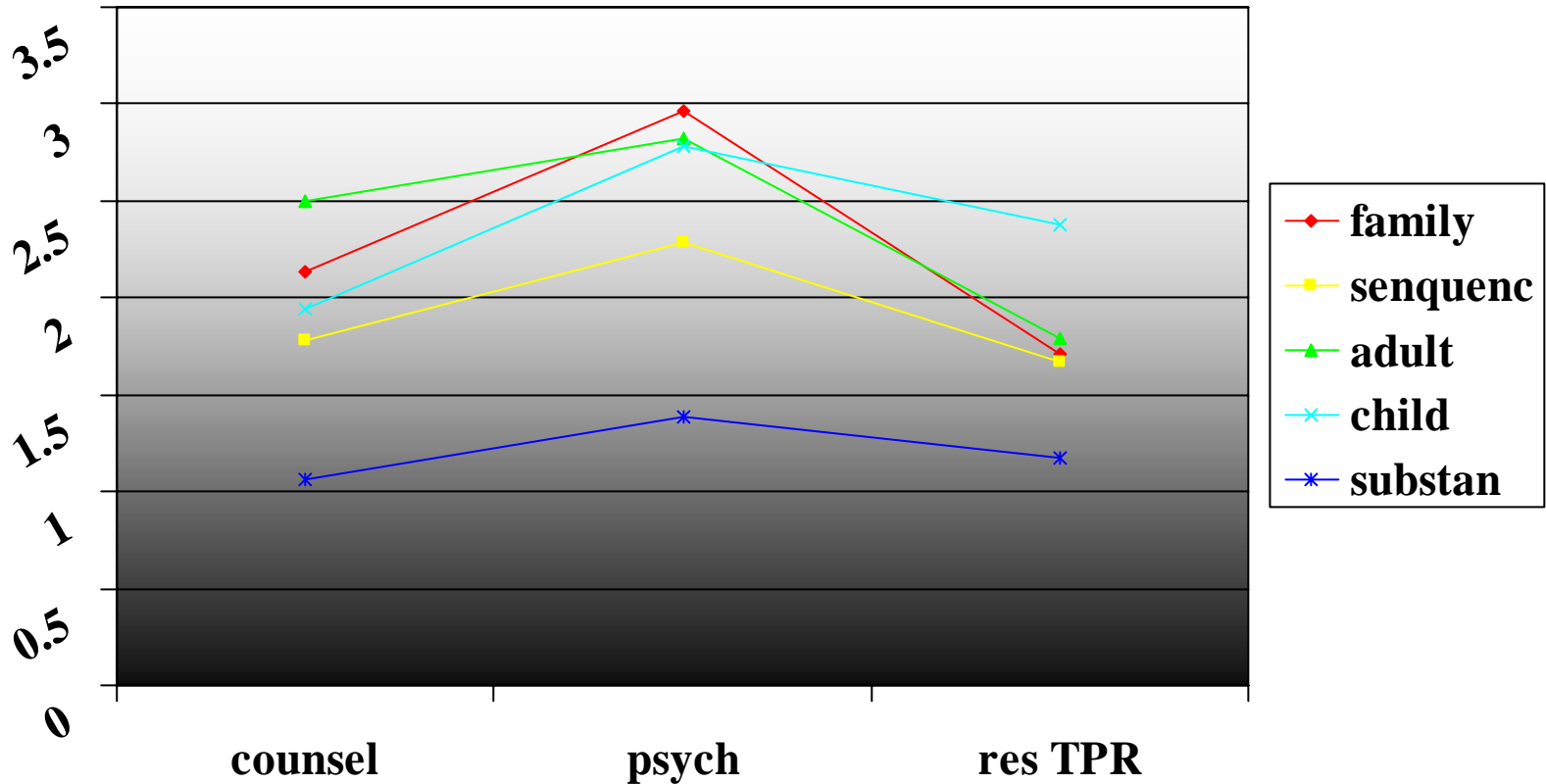
- rating of child behavior patterns at time of reunification ($\rho(94) = .226$; $p = .027$)
- rating of family development at time of reunification ($\rho(94) = .244$; $p = .016$)

Quantitative Results

Test Two

- Conducted Manova, Pillai's Trace test to determine if types of collateral referrals made by social worker influenced reunification assessment scores or recidivism
- Manova overall results: $F(10, 164) = 2.41$; $p = .011$

Differences in ratings grouped by types of referrals

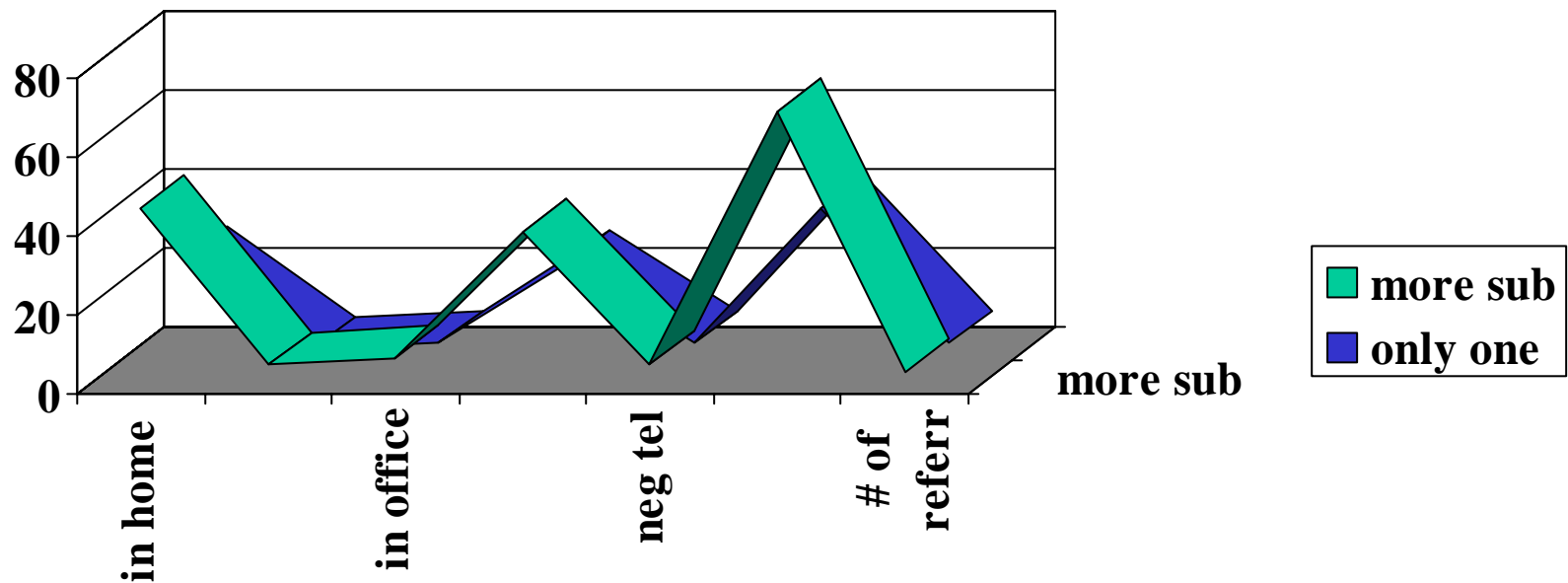


Quantitative Results

Test Three

- Conducted Manova, Pillai's Trace test to determine if number of contacts made by social worker influenced recidivism
- Manova overall results: $F(7, 91) = 16.52$; p is equal to or less than .0001

Difference in number of contacts and multiple substantiations of abuse / neglect



Qualitative

- What are the developmental tasks and stages of families that have children removed?
- What are the circumstances that surround those families?

Qualitative Themes

- 1- Housing issues
- 2- Mental and physical health issues
- 3- Poverty
- 4- Legal issues
- 5- Single Parents
- 6- Drugs or alcohol
- 7- Parental Behaviors

Overlapping Themes

- “Mother admits with regret that she has in affect turned out just like her alcoholic /drug using mother. She had a very rough childhood consisting of being sexually molested by several relatives at a very young age, lost her father to suicide, exposed to alcohol and drugs all her life, and abandoned by her mother. She has had a social worker in her life for most of the children’s lives and has failed to accept any type of rehab or responsibility.”

Relevance to SW

- Important to know the clients we serve and create programs not to just “band-aid” the situation
- Children have been victimized enough by their family’s abuse or neglect and should not have to be re-victimized by the system

Strengths and Limitations

- 100 cases is good sample for this study
- Qualitative heard in the voice of the social worker
- After data collection began, some vital elements were found missing
- Consistency problems in definitions that affect case recording ie- collateral contacts

Future Research

- Study on what types of mental illness responded to what types of treatment better
- It seems that the longer the SW is in the life of the client, not necessarily the better.
Future studies focused on duration could be helpful
- Repeat with time frames of children in care

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